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Published November 15, 2006

Tim Holland gets 30-60 years in prison

Midday Update

By Kevin Grasha
Lansing State Journal

In an emotional hearing, an Ingham County judge departed from sentencing guidelines this morning and sent Tim Holland to prison for 30 years to 60 years for his role in the death of his 7-year-old adopted son, Ricky.

Circuit Court Judge Paula Manderfield, going beyond the minimum sentencing guidelines of 13.5 to 22 years, told Holland: "You knew he was being tortured, and you did nothing."

Tim Holland, 37, pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in early September. Crying as read from a statement, he apologized for what he did, saying he failed as a father and as a human being and that he also failed his son.

"My life is over," he said. "I would gladly exchange my life for his in a heartbeat."

His wife, Lisa Holland, 33, will be sentenced Nov. 28 after an Ingham County jury earlier this month found her guilty of first-degree murder for killing Ricky. She faces a mandatory life sentence.

Ricky Holland was reported missing by his parents July 2, 2005, setting off a massive search. In January of this year, Tim Holland led police to Ricky's body, which had been dumped in a marsh-like game area in rural Ingham County.

Check back at www.lsj.com for more on this story.



(Photo by Becky Shink | Lansing State Journal)
Tim Holland while testifying in his wife, Lisa's, trial last month.

Media files:

- [Tim Holland's handwritten statement read before sentencing \(11.15.06\) - pdf](#)

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Ricky Holland's Adopted Father Gets 30-60 Years

By the Associated Press
November 15, 2006



Ricky Holland

A man who led police to his adopted 7-year-old son's body after claiming the boy had run away was sentenced Wednesday to 30 to 60 years in prison for second-degree murder.

Tim Holland cut a deal with prosecutors in September, agreeing to plead guilty to the charge and testify against his wife to avoid a life term.

"My life is over. My honor has been waylaid," a tearful Holland said during his sentencing hearing.

Holland and his wife, Lisa Holland, had claimed their adopted son Ricky had run away from home in July 2005, sparking an extensive nine-day search by 1,700 volunteers and hundreds of law enforcement officers.

In January, Tim Holland led police to Ricky's body in an Ingham County game area and admitted dumping his son's remains. He told authorities his wife hit Ricky in the head with a hammer while he was away from home.

At Lisa Holland's trial, Tim Holland testified that the boy was listless and unable to walk in the last week of his life -- not eating, drinking or talking and smelling like cat urine.

"You knew he was being tortured, and you did nothing. You did nothing," Circuit Court Judge Paula Manderfield told Holland at his sentencing.

A jury found Lisa Holland guilty last month of felony murder. The charge carries a mandatory life sentence without parole. Sentencing was set for November 28.

The Hollands became Ricky's foster parents in 2000 and adopted him in 2003. They also adopted Ricky's three younger siblings and had a child of their own.

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Abuse hearing delayed

GENESEE COUNTY

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Wednesday, November 15, 2006

By Paul Janczewski

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A hearing for a Fenton Township couple charged with critically injuring the woman's 2 1/2-year-old daughter was adjourned until January.

An attorney representing Jessica Ann Lake said she wants her client to receive forensic testing at a state facility, while an attorney for Christopher L. Rowand wants a delay to study police reports and other documents that he is still receiving.

Lake, 18, and Rowand, 21, are being held on \$500,000 cash bonds in the Genesee County Jail on charges of first-degree child abuse, a 15-year felony.

Police and prosecutors said the couple tried to leave her daughter at Genesys Regional Medical Center in Grand Blanc Township on Nov. 3 and flee but were stopped by police after a nurse alerted officials of the child's severe injuries.

The child had at least four dozen different wounds and injuries, including head trauma and cigarette burns, and may have been sexually abused. The child was admitted in critical condition and now is in Hurley Medical Center.

Officials said Rowand is not the child's father.

Attorney Denise Ketchmark, who represents Lake, told Central District Judge Richard L. Hughes that her client is suffering from depression, possible post-traumatic stress due to her mother's death in February and abuse Lake may have suffered earlier in her life.

Ketchmark also said Lake appears to have impaired judgment in her decision-making, which affects her ability to assist in her defense.

Hughes agreed to allow Lake to be tested at the Center for Forensic Psychiatry near Ann Arbor to determine whether she is competent for trial and can be held criminally responsible for her actions.

Attorney David I. Megdell, who represents Rowand, said his client wants to have a preliminary examination at the same time Lake does.

He said he is also receiving reports from police and prosecutors and needs time to go over them and prepare for his case.

Hughes scheduled Jan. 16 pretrial hearings for the couple.

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Police: Officers shocked by California abuse case

MODESTO, Calif. Police in Modesto, California, are calling it one of the worst child abuse cases they've ever seen.

A three-year-old girl is on life support in Oakland. Police say her body is covered with wounds and cuts that were apparently caused by an electrical cord or other weapon. And a detective says there's no place on her body that hasn't been bruised or scarred.

The child was said to have a body temperature of 79 degrees and was not breathing when paramedics took her from her home this weekend.

Her father and stepmother (Terry and Chandy Indula) have been charged. The couple has pleaded not guilty to three felony counts including mayhem.

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Testimony will be private

Wednesday, November 15, 2006

HOLLAND -- A judge has agreed to close a courtroom to the public during a 9-year-old sex assault victim's testimony against a church volunteer. Holland District Court Judge Susan Jonas agreed to the special conditions Tuesday at the urging of Ottawa County Assistant Prosecutor Judy Mulder, who said the victim is a special-education student who is emotionally delayed and afraid of suspect Eric VanderYacht, 50. VanderYacht, charged with sexually assaulting the girl in a computer room at Calvary Reformed Church, has an upcoming preliminary hearing.

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Mom faces prison after sex case plea

She and boy, 15, had a relationship

BY L.L. BRASIER
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

November 15, 2006

A Farmington Hills mother of three will likely spend at least 3 years -- and up to 15 -- in prison, after pleading no contest to having sex with her son's 15-year-old friend.

Jami Lee Knox, 41, stood with her attorney and in a soft voice, entered her plea in Oakland County Circuit Court on Tuesday.

Knox pleaded to three counts of criminal sexual conduct and three counts of using a computer to commit criminal sexual conduct. Had she gone to trial and been convicted, she would have faced at least 3 years and 9 months in prison.

She will be sentenced Jan. 2 before Oakland County Circuit Judge Rae Lee Chabot.

Knox, a homemaker, admitted to police that she had a months-long relationship with the 15-year-old. The relationship began with text messaging, and eventually led to sexual encounters.

The boy's parents learned of the relationship in July and confronted the boy, who admitted the relationship.

Knox, whose husband, Michael, accompanied her to court Tuesday, left without speaking to reporters. Her attorney, Michael McCarthy, said, "She's pretty stoic about the whole thing, so they're just preparing for the sentencing that's coming up."

Knox was mostly worried about how her family will cope in her absence, he said.

The boy's parents were in court. Their names are being withheld to protect him. The Free Press generally does not identify sex assault victims.

The boy has been in counseling. "He seems to be doing well," his father said. "This helps."

Contact **L.L. BRASIER** at 248-858-2262 or brasier@freepress.com.



Jami Lee Knox

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November 15, 2006

Mom pleads no contest to teen sex

Farmington Hills woman faces sentencing Jan. 2 after deciding not to go through with trial.

Mike Martindale / The Detroit News

PONTIAC -- A Farmington Hills mother of three pleaded no contest Tuesday to three counts of having sex with a teenage friend of her son's and three counts of using a computer to commit a crime.

Jami Lee Knox, 42, entered the plea before Oakland Circuit Judge Rae Lee Chabot and will be sentenced Jan. 2 on the offenses. Under sentencing guidelines Knox, who has no prior criminal record, could receive between three and 15 years in prison.

A no-contest plea is not considered an admission of guilt but is sentenced as such. Knox had earlier entered a not guilty plea but apparently changed in order to spare her family what shaped up to be a very public trial, her attorney Michael McCarthy said.

"This has been very traumatic for her and her family," explained McCarthy outside the courtroom.

If Chabot decides a stiffer sentence is necessary, Knox could withdraw her plea and continue on to trial, McCarthy said, adding he did not expect that to happen.

Knox was accused of setting up meetings with the 15-year-old for the purpose of having sex, including posing as the boy's mother to get him out of school. Investigators said she and the boy had sex in her SUV while parked in a local cemetery and a church parking lot.

Knox is also charged with contributing to the delinquency of a minor in another case pending in Farmington District Court. In that case she is accused of providing a boy with alcohol and marijuana.

Oakland County assistant prosecuting attorney Rob Giles said he felt that sentencing guidelines and Knox's no-contest plea were appropriate.

"It's in line with what a man and first-time offender would get under the same circumstances," Giles said.

Giles said the victim has been ridiculed by classmates at school.

"Perhaps agreeing to this will spare him more of what would occur having to testify in trial," he said.

Knox remains free on \$250,000 bond and on an electronic tether pending sentencing.

You can reach Mike Martindale at (248) 647-7226 or mmartindale@detnews.com.

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Parents accused of keeping adopted kids caged

By **JOE MILICIA**

Associated Press

November 14, 2006

NORWALK, Ohio — Jury selection began today in the trial of a couple accused of abusing some of their 11 adopted special needs children by making them sleep in cages.

Michael and Sharen Gravelle are charged with 16 counts of felony child endangering and if convicted could face one to five years in prison and a maximum fine of \$10,000 for each count. They also each face eight misdemeanor child endangering charges.

The process of seating a jury in Huron County Common Pleas Court could take days, with 100 people being questioned. Earlier, about 350 potential jurors were sent questionnaires, and 250 were weeded out because of bias or other issues, said Ken Myers, who represents Sharen Gravelle.

“There is no case. We’re going to win this thing,” said attorney Richard Drucker, who represents Michael Gravelle.

The youngsters were placed in foster care last fall after a county social worker likened the wood and chicken-wire enclosures to cages or kennels. The Gravelles have denied mistreating the children, who were ages 1 to 15 at the time.

Sharen Gravelle testified at a custody hearing that she and her husband built bunk beds for the children and eventually added chicken wire enclosures and alarms to help prevent them from harming themselves or one another, wandering at night and getting dangerous kitchen utensils.

The children have problems such as fetal alcohol syndrome and a disorder that involves eating nonfood items.

The Gravelles lost permanent custody in March and have not been granted visitation since then, Myers said.

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One brother dead, another charged, man begs family to help cops

LODI, N.J. Michael Barbarino is asking his family to help put one brother behind bars for the death of another brother in New Jersey more than 30 years ago.

Fifty-year-old Joseph Barbarino is accused of killing his then-six-year-old brother Vincent, whose body was found in 1972.

After Joseph was arraigned yesterday, Michael went outside the courtroom and spoke to reporters.

He denounced his brother Joseph and asked the rest of his family to help in Joseph's prosecution.

Michael Barbarino also said he was "present at the scene," and that he is a star witness. He would not give further details.

Authorities say Joseph Barbarino lured his brother to a construction site in order to sexually assault him, then killed him.

Joseph Barbarino was 15 at the time of his brother's death and was arraigned in juvenile court.

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Doctors agree to provide free care

Wednesday, November 15, 2006

By Pat Rombyer

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Working hard, but your employer doesn't provide health insurance?

Worried about what happens if your back goes out and lays you up again?

Come Jan. 1, there will be help.

Eighty Jackson-area physicians have signed on to provide free care for those who lack health insurance, officials said Tuesday.

Project Access is a collaboration of physicians from the Jackson County Medical Society and Foote Hospital who are teaming with the Jackson County Community Foundation, LifeWays and the United Way of Jackson County.

They estimate 16,000 people could be eligible for the effort.

The beauty of it, said United Way Executive Director Ken Toll, is that medical care will be free to those who need it.

"No money changes hands," he said.

The doctors are volunteering their services, Foote is providing diagnostic testing, LifeWays is providing administrative services and the community foundation provided a \$40,000 grant to fund a coordinator and get the project up and running.

It will target the working poor -- those who make too much money to qualify for Medicaid but have no employer-provided insurance.

"There's help for children and those who qualify for Medicare (65 and older), but nothing for those in between," said Dr. Brian Adamczyk, president of the county medical society. "This fills a gap."

Patients will be incorporated into an existing practice. Each of the doctors has agreed to take on at least 10 patients a year.

Most Jackson-area doctors do provide some free medical care, he said.

"Unfortunately, that care is often fragmented," Adamczyk said. "Patients usually lack full access to medications, diagnostic services and specialty care.

"This will provide good continuity."

Project Access will organize the care in a cost-effective system to reach as many as possible.

Project Access grew out of a summit two years ago in Jackson, when physicians and other health-care providers met to hammer out a way to provide health care to the uninsured.

They listened as Dr. Suzanne Landis of Asheville, N.C., Project Access' founder, explained how it worked in

her community. It is now functioning in about 100 cities around the country.

"We've spent two years pulling this together," Adamczyk said.

"It gives me goosebumps just thinking about it."

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The News-Herald

A Heritage Newspaper

DCC again offers winter home-heating assistance

By Bobby Ampezzan
, The News-Herald

SOUTHGATE — As it has the two previous winters, the Downriver Community Conference has secured a state grant for home-heating assistance.

The conference will administer \$500,000 in aid from the Michigan Public Service Commission to low-income residents who qualify.

Paula Anderson, who directs the program for the DCC, said the heating-assistance grants, which offer a maximum of \$1,000 per household, often only dent homeowners' total utility bills.

Anderson said many families Downriver owe between \$6,000 and \$7,000. The highest bill she's ever seen was \$11,000.

"When you're low income, it's kind of hard to pay all your bills," Anderson said. "So they probably push aside utility bills for house payment, food. ... We get so many with shut-off notices."

This phenomenon hasn't gone unnoticed at the state level, said Judy Palnau, spokeswoman for the Michigan Public Service Commission.

"We know from the calls we get that a lot of low-income folks are very much in need of assistance," Palnau said.

This year, the commission will disburse record funding of \$45 million throughout the state.

The aid for low-income users comes from every other user in the state through a low-income fund created when the utility industry was restructured as a result of legislation passed in 2000.

Along with the establishment of the fund, part of the legislation also includes a "Winter Protection Plan," which prohibits shut-offs during the winter months.

On top of the \$45 million in energy assistance, the Michigan Public Service Commission will disburse \$15 million for weatherization this year. That is another program offered by the Downriver Community Conference.

"Prices on the wholesale level have increased tremendously in the last five years," Palnau said.

In fact, residents Downriver have seen their rates rise 200 percent.

"Last year, people who had never sought assistance before were contacting these agencies," Palnau said.

In 2005, The Heat And Warmth Fund, known as THAW, commissioned a study from Boston economist Roger Colton. It found that Michigan residents at 150 percent to 180 percent of the federal poverty threshold "are not making it," Executive Director Kathy Walgren said. And that population is the fast growing in the state.

At 150 percent of the poverty threshold, a family of four earns \$30,000 annually.

Walgren said the national standard for energy affordability is 6 percent of annual income: on average, an energy bill should not exceed 6 percent of total household income.

"When you start paying 10 or 12 percent, that cuts into other necessities," Walgren said.

A study released this year found that children under the age of 3 living in low-income homes typically lose weight in winter as the family struggles with the decision to "eat or heat," Walgren added.

The combination of a deteriorating economy, especially for blue-collar workers, and spiking fuel costs makes for "a perfect storm," she said.

Add to that severe federal budget cuts.

In the past, funding from the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program aided one-third of struggling Michigan residents. This year's budget will cover one-sixth.

This year, the lion's share of the \$45 million being disbursed by the Michigan Public Service Commission — \$31 million — went to the state's own Department of Human Services.

The Salvation Army, as well as agencies in Lansing, Oakland County, Newaygo County and several Wayne County agencies, received the remaining \$14 million.

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Winter wear drive underway

Gladwin County Record

GLADWIN COUNTY — The Gladwin County Youth Action Council (GladYAC) and the Gladwin County DHS are teaming up to sponsor a Winter Wear Drive that will benefit area families.

Individuals who would like to donate new or gently used coats, hats, gloves, snow pants and boots may do so through Dec. 15. There is always a need for extra large coats for men and women.

Drop off sites in Beaverton include Chemical Bank and both Fruchey's locations. Drop off sites in Gladwin include Chemical Bank, Glen's, and the Gladwin Community Arena.



LETTER: Reduce costs, reuse building

Tuesday, November 14, 2006

There has been media publicity lately (Oct. 24) trumpeting the proposed construction of a new \$27,000,000 Department of Human Services building through the combined effort of Kent County Finance and Physical Resources Committee and Michigan State Department of Management and Budget.

Although there are those who might consider a new building a necessity I am of the opinion that we can recycle an existing building to match the current and future needs required to service clients at that site for less than the proposed 27 million dollars. Daily, I drive 28th Street through the City of Wyoming and see the former Rogers Department store sitting vacant. It appears that the \$5 million dollar 150,000-square-foot building is more than adequate to meet the required 126,000 square feet deemed necessary for staff, clients, visitors, and administrators. Additionally, 700 parking spaces are available, negating any on street parking as in the Franklin Street Campus proposal. It is in close proximity to US-131, M-6, and I-96. It is on a major thoroughfare with bus service available. There are supporting retailers and restaurants in the immediate area for employees. The Grand Rapids city income tax would be avoided providing more take home earnings for employees. The need for security personnel would not be required as is at the current site and probably at the proposed, saving additional expenditure for the state. Other county and state services could be housed there, saving further lease expense. A subsequent benefit would be the Secretary of State Office located across the street in Roger Plaza for those in need of a state ID card.

This is a very similar situation to the old City Center, which has been successfully recycled to accommodate the Grand Rapids Police Department and other state and federal agencies.

I am hopeful that before taxpayers are committed to constructing a new \$27 million building, this logical suggestion would be embraced, investigated, pursued and discussed as it appears to be a win-win proposal for employees, clients, and taxpayers!

Jerry Wright,

Grand Rapids

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Three candidates seek interim post; interviews are set

Tuesday, November 14, 2006

By Dawn Parker

For the Citizen Patriot

The Leslie School Board will meet at 6:30 p.m. Thursday to interview three candidates for interim superintendent.

Dan Heckman is a retired superintendent of Plainwell Public Schools, while Bob Harberts retired as the chief of Battle Creek Public Schools. The third candidate, Don Weatherspoon, was a longtime employee of the Michigan Department of Education whose last position with the state was as chief deputy director of the Family Independence Agency, now called the Department of Human Services.

The interviews, open to the public, will be at the administration office, 432 N. Main St.

Superintendent Robert Howe Jr. will resign to take a post as executive director of the Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association. His last day is Dec. 1.

Board vice president William Myers, who presided over Monday's regular board meeting in the absence of president Randy Sherrell, said a timetable for hiring a superintendent will be set in the near future.

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